

DERALLUS ALTUS (LECONTE), A SOUTHERN WATER BEETLE, IN NEW JERSEY

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Among a small collection of water beetles from southern New Jersey, the author discovered a little, somewhat compressed, black, striate hydrophilid of unfamiliar appearance. A specimen was sent to Mr. K. F. Chamberlain who identified the species as *Derallus altus* (LeConte), a supposedly rare and, up to the present, little known southern form. Mr. Chamberlain pointed out that this discovery provides an interesting addition to our knowledge of southern elements in the New Jersey fauna and, at his suggestion, the following note has been prepared for publication.

The locality from which the specimens were taken is situated at the head of Magnolia Lake, Cape May County, N. J., at a place where a dirt road crosses the inflowing stream. It is not an entirely natural habitat since Magnolia Lake is itself the result of an artificial damming of Mill Creek, and moreover the grassy bank of the road, sloping down to the stream on the side opposite the lake, is obviously in part the result of human construction. *D. altus* was taken among debris obtained by stomping up the submerged grass roots and marginal vegetation of the stream bank in this place. It was not found among the reed beds, water lilies, or other aquatic vegetation bordering the open water. Five specimens were taken on August 17, 1947, by the author. Five more were taken on September 13, by Prof. A. Petrunkevitch and Mr. W. D. Hartman, who revisited the locality at my request, and to whom my best thanks are due.

Within the continental limits of the United States previous records of this species are confined to the south-east. LeConte (1855) recorded the original specimens from New Orleans and the species was redescribed by Horn (1873). Louisiana is the

only record mentioned in Leng's Catalogue, or its supplements to date. Nevertheless *D. altus* was collected by Blatchley (1919) in Florida and, more recently, it has been taken by Löding (1945) in Alabama. I am indebted to Dr. F. N. Young, of the University of Florida, for calling my attention to the last mentioned record. Dr. Young informs me that he has taken this species from a number of localities in Florida and expects to publish the full records shortly. In regard to the habits of this species he states (*in litt.*): "My collecting notes indicate that the species is fairly abundant at times, but usually rather local. I think one reason for its rarity in collections may be due to its secretive habits. It does not appear to be strictly coastal, nor highly seasonal."

Outside of the United States, d'Orchymont (1943) has recorded the occurrence of *D. altus* in the Brazilian provinces of Pernambuco, Ceará and Piauí, collected by Dr. O. Schubart, and notes that it also occurs on the island of Guadeloupe. According to d'Orchymont it is found chiefly in quiet water. J. Balfour-Browne informs me (*in litt.*) that he has seen specimens from Argentina and Bolivia, in addition to the Brazilian specimens in the British Museum. I am greatly indebted to him for permission to include this interesting extension to our knowledge of the southern range of the species. New Jersey thus appears to be the northern limit for a species of rather wide, and possibly even of peregrine, neotropical distribution.

References

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